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Dear Fulbrighters,

This month has been another busy and exciting one at the Fulbright Program office. Our selection process for next fall's Fulbright class of Vietnamese scholars and students is coming to a close. Prospective students are busy taking preliminary tests and interviewing, while the peer review panel will be occupied with recommending prospective scholars for final selection.

While we attend to selecting new Fulbrighters, we are not forgetting about past Fulbrighters. In December, we are organizing two evenings receptions, one in Hanoi and another in Ho Chi Minh City, for all Fulbrighters. It has been a while since we have all met at a gathering and these receptions would be a good chance for all of us to catch up on what's happening in each other's lives. These receptions will also be a great opportunity for newly arrived American and returning Vietnamese Fulbrighters to meet one another.

As many of you may already know, President Bill Clinton is scheduled to visit Vietnam in mid-November. It will be an exciting but busy time for the Fulbright Program office since we will be assisting with certain aspects of the President's visit. Our office will be operating on a normal schedule. However, if you encounter any difficulty contacting us, please be persistent in calling, emailing or faxing us your requests.

Finally, I would like to thank Danang University and Ha Le Hung, former Fulbright student and head of the Danang University Information Center, for inviting me to the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the university and the groundbreaking of Vietnam's first online university library. I was very honored to be invited along with all the presidents of major universities in Vietnam.

Best wishes,



Tran Xuan Thao, Ph.D.  
Director  
Fulbright Program in Vietnam

## FULBRIGHTER UPDATES:

### **Student selection process continues**

The selection of Vietnam's Fulbright Fellows for the 2001 academic year continues. Fifty-two (52) semifinalists were chosen for interviews which took place from October 18th – October 27th in Hanoi, Da Nang and Ho Chi Minh City. As most returned Fulbrighters know, the Institute of International Education (IIE) helps administer the student component of the program in the United States. The Fulbright Program in Vietnam was fortunate to have Michael Pippenger and Kevin O'Grady travel from IIE-New York to conduct the interviews.

At this time, all semifinalists are also taking the Institutional TOEFL and the GRE or GMAT, depending on their field of study. Final decisions about this year's grantees should be published in December.

### **Vietnamese Scholar Program (VSP) applications increase 111.8%**

When the application deadline for the Vietnamese Scholar Program (VSP) closed on Monday, October 16, the Fulbright Program Office was pleased to see that the number of applications had increased by 111.8% from last year. Applicants, of whom 22% are female, come from a broad range of backgrounds including economics, education, environmental science, engineering and sociology.

In late November, a peer review panel comprised of American and Vietnamese experts from various academic disciplines will convene to select candidates who are distinguished by their academic prominence, who are involved in research vital to national priorities and who possess the potential to become key figures in their field. By mid-December, all applicants will be notified of the results and short-listed applicants are scheduled to be interviewed by the Fulbright Program Office to assess their English language abilities. The Program then sends its recommendations to the Council for the International Exchange of Scholars (CIES) in the United States for further evaluation. Once the candidates' records are assessed, CIES forwards its results to the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, which makes the final decision on who the successful applicants will be for academic year 2001-02. The entire selection process will take place over the period of a few months, with the results to be announced sometime early next year.

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

| What                                | Who               | Where | When              |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-------|-------------------|
| Vietnam Scholar peer review session | Peer review panel | Hanoi | November 24, 2000 |
| * Fulbright Dinner Reception        | All Fulbrighters  | Hanoi | December 2000     |
| * Fulbright Dinner Reception        | All Fulbrighters  | HCMC  | December 2000     |

\* Event dates will be announced pending sufficient interest

**Pre-departure orientation likely in February**

Next February, IIE-Hanoi will help the Fulbright Office organize a pre-departure orientation for all newly selected Fulbright grantees. Diane Young, Fulbright Program Officer, welcomes your suggestions and ideas about what needs to be included in this program. Please take a few minutes and respond to the following questions by phone, letter or email ([dyhano@pd.state.gov](mailto:dyhano@pd.state.gov)). Thank you for your time.

1. What do you wish you had known before leaving Vietnam for your Fulbright study that you did not know?
2. If applicable, what part of your orientation did you find most useful? And what was least useful?
3. How long do you think the orientation needs to be?
4. What topics do you think need to be covered? Who should be the presenters?
5. Please feel free to add any other suggestions or ideas.

## USEFUL INFORMATION:

**HANOI:**

U.S. Embassy  
7 Lang Ha  
Hanoi, Vietnam  
Tel: (04) 843-1500  
Fax: (04) 843-1510

Public Affairs Section - Hanoi  
6 Ngoc Khanh  
Hanoi, Vietnam  
Tel: (04) 831-4580  
Fax: (04) 831-4601  
Email: [fulbrightvn@fpt.vn](mailto:fulbrightvn@fpt.vn)

**HO CHI MINH CITY:**

U.S. Consulate  
4 Le Duan, District 1  
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam  
Tel: (08) 822-9433  
Fax: (08) 822-9434

Public Affairs Section - HCMC  
9/F, Saigon Centre  
65 Le Loi, District 1  
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam  
Tel: (08) 821-6400  
Fax: (08) 821-6405

**Fulbright Program Website:**

<http://www.usembassy.state.gov/vietnam/wwwfhfp.html>

## FULBRIGHT IN THE NEWS:

### Mart Stewart's American Studies course garners high interest

Barely a month into his arrival in Vietnam, Professor Mart Stewart, a Fulbright Scholar, has already stirred a lot of interest through his seminars on American Studies at the Center for International Education and Cultural Exchange and Research (CIECER) of HCMC University of Education. The following are excerpts of his interview featured in *The Saigon Times Weekly* (October 7, 2000).

*From your knowledge of American culture, history and customs, what are the do's and don'ts for Vietnamese business people to be successful in the American market?*

I think that it's important to be creative and understand that there are opportunities for creativity in dealing with the American economy and market, and to be open. The process of developing economic relationship with the United States is a complicated one. However, if people understand that there is a great deal of variety and opportunities in America, then businesses interested in establishing ties are more likely to understand how important it is to be creative. There're many ways of doing business in the United States. If one way doesn't work, then it's good to try something else.

*Asian businesses often remark that Vietnamese culture is similar to theirs, thus making it easier for them to conduct business in Vietnam. However, there seems to be a gap between Vietnamese and American cultures and lifestyles. Do you think that these differences are obstacles to bilateral business relations?*

The differences are very interesting to some people and not to others. Some people who enjoy differences and variety and who perhaps have had some experience with this, will enjoy moving to other cultures. Other people do not; they want life to be predictable and reliable. It depends more on the individual, rather than whether you're American or Vietnamese. I do think, however, knowing something about other cultures makes it easier to experience and conduct business in that culture.

*Vietnamese entrepreneurs have complained they have less information about the U.S than what their American partners know about Vietnam. Is it true given the situation of your Vietnamese students?*

I don't know if it's true, though I think that high-quality information is difficult to acquire wherever one might be. It's sometimes easier for Americans because they have easier access to more information in the United States through books, the internet and other sources. It's more difficult for Vietnamese sometimes to get information about the United States. Also, Americans have more opportunities to travel; so, it's more likely American business people will come to Vietnam than the other way around. But again, variety comes from individuals, I think, more than from whether one is Vietnamese or American. In my classes, for example, some students are knowledgeable and highly motivated. Given the resources that they have, they've done really well. Others are less informed. There's variety.

*From your scientific view, what are your remarks on Vietnam-U.S. relations in recent years?*

The global economy is one in which everyone is involved. This has been the most important development in the last 25 years, and it goes beyond the time of politics and ideology that were important thirty or forty years ago.

## FROM YOU:

Have you moved recently? Please write your new contact details here and fax or email to PAS - Hanoi: (04) 831-4601 or [fulbrightvn@fpt.vn](mailto:fulbrightvn@fpt.vn).

New Address: \_\_\_\_\_ New telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ New fax: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ New E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## FULBRIGHT STORY:

### **Truong Khoa: Making friends and gaining appreciation for Vietnam and family**

In June 1999, I left home for the U.S. with mixed feelings. On one hand, I was really excited because this was the opportunity that I had been waiting for: returning to the academic environment and at the same time, discovering a new life on my own. On the other hand, I did not know what to expect. I imagined studying in the U.S. would be challenging; I knew leaving family behind wouldn't be easy. Then I told myself: try your best and enjoy all your experiences. Looking back now, I can say that I have had a really wonderful time.

After a small change, IIE placed me at the Economics Institute in Boulder, Colorado, for academic preparation. Boulder was a cool place. The town was surrounded by the rough Rocky Mountains. The sky was always clear and blue. I felt, though, that the town had only two types of people: tourists and students. Unfortunately, I fell into the latter category! Life at the Economics Institute was a real race. All the international students came here to prepare themselves for graduate studies. Everybody looked busy but smiles hardly disappeared on their faces, which helped facilitate cross-cultural friendships. It was interesting to learn that I was not alone in trying to adapt to American society. Life in the U.S., in general, and on campus, in particular, was new to almost everybody in my class. Each of us had something new to discover, learn and enjoy everyday.

After 2 months in Boulder, I went to Williams College in Massachusetts. Williams was such an excellent place to study, enjoy the beauty of nature and learn the cultural richness of New England. The master's degree program at the Center for Development Economics is designed for economists from low and middle-income countries who have some practical experience. The program provided us with a thorough understanding of fundamental concepts and techniques of economic analysis, which are essential to the formulation of good economic policies. With an emphasis on the application of the analytical techniques of economics to study the process of development, we were encouraged to apply them to real-life situations via vigorous debates and evaluation of economic policies. As part of the degree requirements, I focused my research on issues related to international trade and public finance. Interestingly enough, though I was very far from home, I learned a great deal about Vietnam's economy and the economic opportunities and challenges it faces. More than ever, I feel greatly attached to my homeland and hope that one day I can do something to contribute to the well-being of my people.

The Center for Development Economics was not only an academic institute but also a rich environment for cultural exchange among students. The Class of 2000 had students from 13 countries. We lived and worked, studied and debated, played and worried, cooked and ate together. During the course of my time there, I experienced some of the most beautiful moments of life and developed great friendships: sharing sleepless nights thinking of home, admiring the purple hue of the Berkshire mountains during sunset, feeling the falling, soft, white snow and the quietness of nature...

Early June this year, I left Williams College for New York City where I have been interning with Sanwa Bank ever since. Every morning I join the endless flow of people walking hurriedly on Wall Street or Park Avenue. It is so great to learn and see with my own eyes the dynamic financial market right in the world's financial center. Living and working here brings me thrilling experiences that I had never imagined before. There is so much to discover and learn everyday in such a unique environment. Thanks to modern telecommunications technology and the Internet, I have felt close to my family, my home country and my international friends. The Internet has been the primary means of communication between the "Fulbright World" and me. I have been given the most effective assistance from the people and the agencies that administer the Fulbright fellowship. I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep and sincere gratitude to all of you who have made my Fulbright experience so great. My life here has been much easier and more comfortable thanks to you. There is no doubt that the knowledge and experience I have obtained from here will be extremely useful. They will certainly widen the doors to my future career.

When this year comes to an end, I will pack my luggage to "sail" home. Of course, until then, there are still many books to read, many tasks to do, many new things to explore; I want to make the best of my time here. Nevertheless, thinking of returning home makes me feel so good: my family, the endless source of happiness, is waiting for me.

*- Truong Dang Khoa, Vietnamese Fulbright Student, Class of 2000*

**FULBRIGHT FEATURE:****Jennifer Foley holes up in Danang to study Cham art**

Well, I've stormed the beach and set up camp here in Danang. The weather is lovely and the beach is only 2 km away, so what more could I want? Coming to Danang from Hanoi is sort of like going from Boston to West Virginia. Maybe not quite that drastic. The town is, well, small. It's got some charming colonial-era buildings and the Cham Museum is a joy.

I'm here in Danang to research and write my dissertation as a comparative study of dance imagery from Champa and Cambodia, from between the 9th and 11th centuries. Danang is close to My Son, and has the Cham Museum, which has the largest collection of Cham sculpture in the world. I went there the other day and it's really lovely. It made me feel pretty good about my research. I'm also going to do a bit of wandering around central Vietnam, to Nha Trang, Phan Rang, Thap Cham, Qui Nhon, etc., researching the temples and their art. And no, I'm not going to those places for the beaches. It's just a very nice coincidence those places have beaches nearby. After I finish up my research in Vietnam, I'm planning to go to Cambodia, where I'll probably spend about a year looking at temples and sculptures there.

Aside from my research activities, things here are going pretty well. The people at the university have been very nice thus far, and quite helpful. I've been called a "Lien Xo," or Soviet, very often, though I attempted to correct a mushroom seller in the market by informing her that I was not a Lien Xo, and that most of the Soviets had decamped back to Russia nearly a decade ago. She turned to her friend and said that the Lien Xo (me) spoke in a funny Hanoi accent. She then told me I was fat. I think it was her way of being affectionate.

I've found a place to exercise, at least, and attempted to take a class there as well. It involved some sort of military calisthenics, most of which looked like they were designed precisely to cause long-term damage to one's back. I declined to do half of the exercises altogether and modified the rest. I was roundly lectured by the woman next to me who said I should always follow the teacher's instructions. Fortunately, after the class, I had a nice talk with the teacher, who also runs the place, and it seems like I'll be able to work out there on my own. She was also very curious about how we do aerobics and exercise in the United States, especially after I told her I used to teach a step class at home.

On the upside, my bicycle tire blew out the other day--the result of the half-kilometer of unpaved bone-jarring road that leads to the little alley where I live on. The bicycle repairmen told me at least four times that American women were very beautiful. Well, at least someone thinks so, I thought. When I'm feeling down (i.e., after each trip to the market to see the mushroom seller), I'll blow my tire and go have it fixed by the nice man. Anyways, as the rats are literally running out from behind the computer and across the keyboard, which I'm taking as a sign I've been on long enough, I'm going to take off for now. For all you Fulbrighters out there who are in Danang or thinking of dropping by, I would love to hear from you. You can contact me through the Fulbright Program office.

*- Jennifer Foley, US Fulbright Student, Class of 2001*